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“The
Old Swimmin’-hole,”

AND

’Leven More Poems,

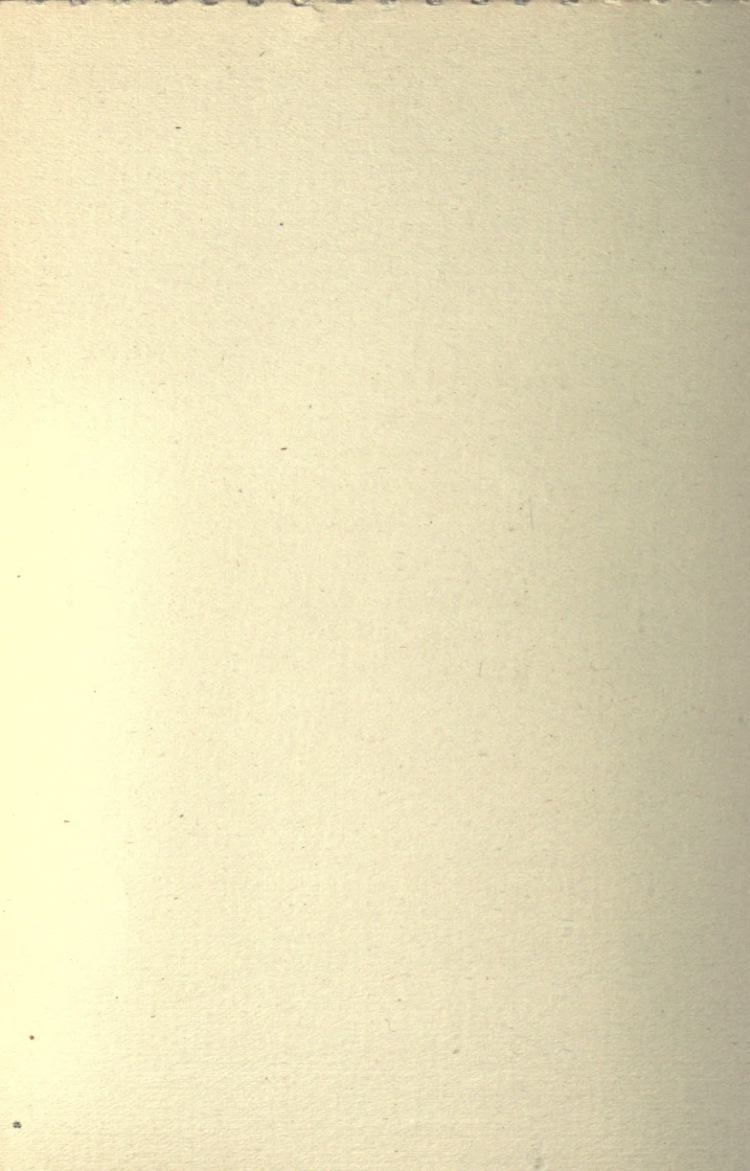
BY

BENJ. F. JOHNSON, OF BOONE.

[JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.]

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.:
GEORGE C. HITT & CO.
1883





FACSIMILE REPRINT

of the first edition of the first book by

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

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**"THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE,"
AND 'LEVEN MORE POEMS.**



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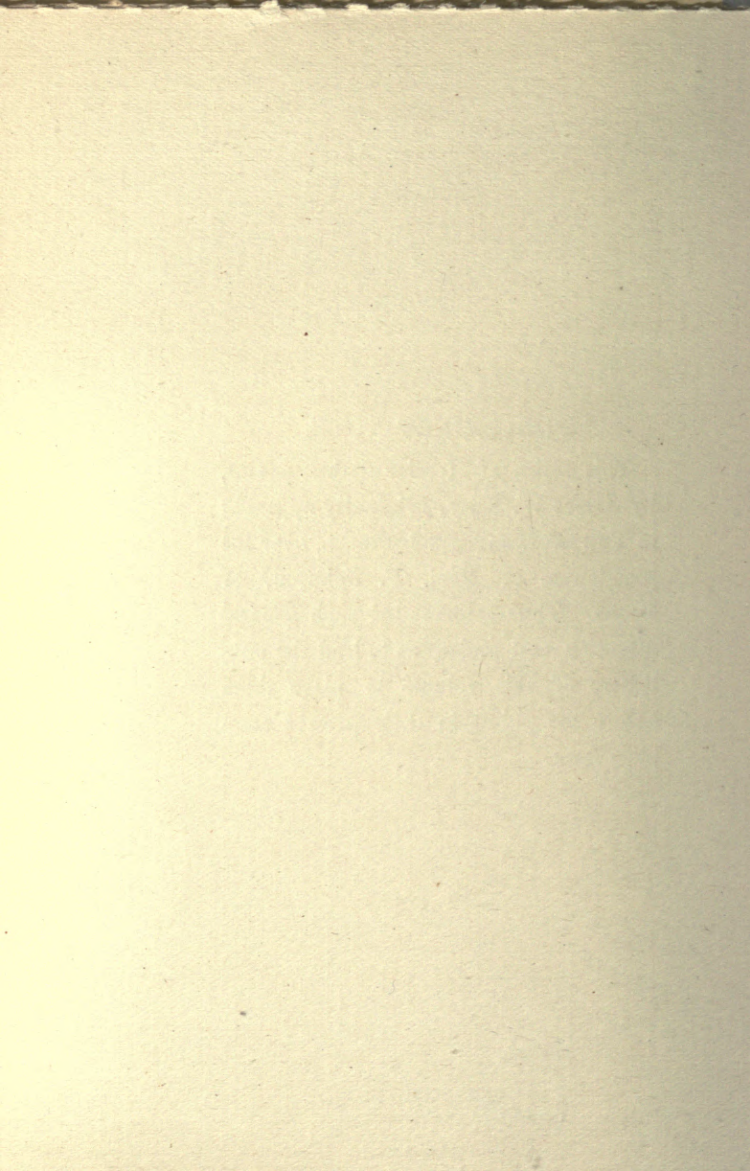
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By JAMES W RILEY

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

This series of Hoosier dialect poems, by James W. Riley, originally appeared in THE INDIANAPOLIS JOURNAL, over the pseudonym of Benj. F. Johnson, of Boone. They commanded such general attention and praise, as to lead the publishers of this volume to place them before the public in their present complete form.



PREFACE.

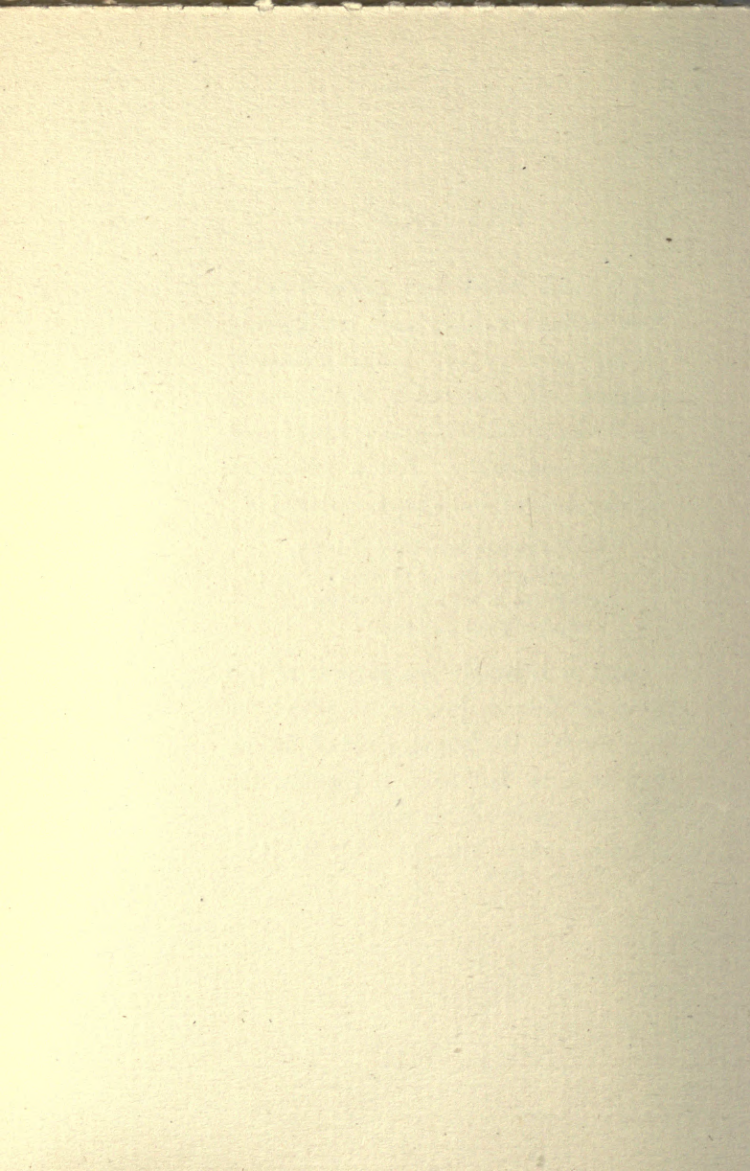
AS FAR BACK into boyhood as the writer's memory may intelligently go, the "country poet" is most pleasantly recalled. He was, and is, as common as the "country fiddler," and as full of good old-fashioned music. Not a master of melody, indeed, but a poet, certainly—

"Who, through long days of labor,
And nights devoid of ease,
Still heard in his soul the music
Of wonderful melodies."

And it is simply the purpose of this series of dialectic Studies, to reflect the real worth of this homely child of Nature, and to echo faithfully, if possible, the faltering music of his song.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND. }
July, 1883 }

J. W. R.



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THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE AND 'LEVEN MORE POEMS.

THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! whare the
crick so still and deep
Looked like a baby-river that was laying
half asleep,
And the gurgle of the worter round the
the drift jest below
Sounded like the laugh of something we
onc't ust to know
Before we could remember anything but
the eyes
Of the angels lookin' out as we left Para-
dise;
But the merry days of youth is beyond our
control,
And it's hard to part ferever with the old
swimmin'-hole.

10 THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! In the happy
days of yore,
When I ust to lean above it on the old
sickamore,
Oh! it showed me a face in its warm sunny
tide
That gazed back at me so gay and glorified,
It made me love myself, as I leaped to ca-
ress
My shadder smilin' up at me with such
tenderness.
But them days is past and gone, and old
'Time's tuck his toll
From the old man come back to the old
swimmin'-hole.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! In the long,
lazy days
When the hum-drum of school made so
many run-a-ways,
How pleasant was the journey down the old
dusty lane,
Whare the tracks of our bare feet was all
printed so plain
You could tell by the dent of the heel and
the sole
They was lots o' fun on hands at the old
'swimmin'-hole.

THE OLD SWIMMIN HOLE. 11

But the lost joys is past! Let your tears in
sorrow roll
Like the rain that ust to dapple up the old
swimmin'-hole.

Thare the bullrushes growed, and the cat-
tails so tall,
And the sunshine and shadder fell over it
all;
And it mottled the worter with amber and
gold
Till the glad lilies rocked in the ripples
that rolled;
And the snake-feeder's four gauzy wings
fluttered by
Like the ghost of a daisy dropped out of
the sky,
Or a wovnded apple-blossom in the breeze's
control,
As it cut acrost some orchard to'rds the old
swimmin'-hole.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! When I last
saw the place,
The scenes was all changed, like the
change in my face:
The brdge of the railroad now crosses the
spot

12 *THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE.*

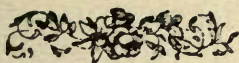
Whare the old divin'-log lays sunk and
fergot.

And I stray down the banks whare the
trees ust to be—

But never again will their shade shelter me!
And I wish in my sorrow I could strip to
the soul,

And dive off in my grave like the old
swimmin'-hole!





THOUGHTS FER THE DISCOURAGED FARMER.

'THE summer winds is sniffin' round the
bloomin' locus' trees ;
And the clover in the pastur' is a big day
fer the bees,
And they been a-swiggin' honey, above-
board and on the sly,
Till they stutter in their buzzin', and stagger
as they fly.
The flicker on the fence-rail 'pears to jest
spit on his wings
And roll up his feathers, by the sassy way
he sings ;
And the hoss-fly is a-whettin'-up his fore-
legs fer biz,
And the off-mare is a-switchin' all of her
tale they is.

You can hear the blackbirds jawin' as they
foller up the plow—
Oh, they bound to git their brekfast,
and theyr not a carin' how ;

14 *DISCOURAGED FARMER.*

So they quarrel in the furries; and they
quarrel on the wing—
But they'r peaceabler in pot-pies than any
other thing.

And its when I git my shotgun drawed up
in stiddy rest,
She's as full of tribbellation as a yaller-
jacket's nest;
And a few shots before dinner, when the
sun's a-shinin' right,
Seems to kindo-sorto, sharpen up a feller's
appetite!

They's been a heap o' rain, but the sun's out
to-day,
And the clouds of the wet spell is all
cleared away,
And the woods is all the greener, and the
grass is greener still;
It may rain again to-morry, but I don't
think it will.

Some says the crops is ruined, and the corn's
drownded out,
And propa-sy the wheat will be a failure,
without doubt;
But the kind Providence that has never
failed us yet,
Will be on hands onc't more at the 'leventh
'hour, I bet!

Does the medder-lark complain, as he swims
high and dry
Through the waves of the wind and the
blue of the sky?

Does the quail set up and whistle in a dis-
appointed way,
Er hang his head in silence, and sorrow all
the day?

Is the chipmunck's health a-failin'? Does
he walk, er does he run?

Don't the buzzards ooze around up thare
jest like they've allus done?

Is they anything the matter with the
rooster's lungs er voice?

Ort a mortal be complainin' when dumb
animals rejoice?

Then let us, one and all, be contented with
our lot;

The June is here this morning, and the sun
is shining hot.

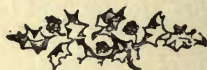
Oh! let us fill our harts up with the glori-
of the day,

And banish ev'ry doubt and care and sor-
row far away!

Whatever be our station, with Providence
'fer guide,

16 *DISCOURAGED FARMER.*

Such fine circumstances ort to make us
satisfied;
Fer the world is full of roses, and the roses
full of dew,
And the dew is full of heavenly love that
drips fer me and you.





A SUMMER'S DAY.

THE Summer's put the idy in
My head that I'm a boy again ;
 'And all around 's so bright and gay
 I want to put my team away
 And jest git out whare I can lay
 And soak my hide full of the day !
But work is work, and must be done—
Yet, as I work, I have my fun,
Jest fancyin' these furries here
Is childhood's paths onc't more so dear :—
And so I walk through medder-lands,
 And country lanes, and swampy trails
Whare long bullrushes bresh my hands ;
 And, tilted on the ridered rails
 Of deadnin' fences, " Old Bob White "
 Whistles his name in high delight,
And whirrs away. I wonder still
Whichever way a boy's feet will—
Whare trees has fell, with tangled tops
 Whare dead leaves shakes, I stop fer,
Hearin' the acorn as it drops— [breath,
 H'istin' my chin up still as deth,

And watchin' clos't, with upturned eyes,
The tree whare Mr. Squirrel tries
To hide hissself above the limb,
But lets his own tale tell on him.

I wunder on in deeper glooms—
Git hungry, hearin' female cries
From old farm-houses, whare perfumes
Of harvest dinners seems to rise
And ta'nt a feller, hart and brane,
With memories he can't explain.

I wunder through the underbresh,
Whare pig-tracks pintin' to'rds the crick,
Is picked and printed in the fresh
Black-bottom lands, like wimmern pick
Their pie-crusts with a fork, some way,
When takin' fer camp-meetin' day.

I wunder on and on and on,
Till my gray hair and beard is gone,
And every wrinkle on my brow
Is rubbed clean out, and shaddered now
With curls as brown and fair and fine
As tendrils of the wild grape-vine
That ust to climb the highest tree
To keep the ripest ones fer me.
I wunder still, and here I am
Wadin' the ford below the dam—

The worter chucklin' round my knee
At hornet-welt and bramble-scratch,
And me-a-slippin' 'crost to see
Ef 'Tyner's plums is ripe, and size
The old man's wortermelon-patch
With juicy mouth and drouthy eyes.
Then, after sich a day of mirth
And happiness as worlds is worth—
So tired that heaven seems nigh about—
The sweetest tiredness on earth
Is to git home and flatten out—
So tired you can't lay flat enough,
And sort o' wish that you could spread
Out like molasses on the bed,
And jest drip off the aidges in
The dreams that never comes again.





A HYMN OF FAITH.

O, THOU that doth all things devise
And fashion fer the best,
Help us who sees with mortal eyes
To overlook the rest.

They's times, of course, we grope in doubt,
And in affliction sore;
So knock the louder, Lord, without,
And we'll unlock the door.

Make us to feel, when times looks bad
And tears in pitty melts,
Thou wast the only help we had
When they was nothin' else.

Death comes alike to ev'ry man
That ever was borned on earth;
Then let us do the best we can
To live fer all life's worth.

Ef storms and tempests dread to see
Makes black the heavens o'er,

They done the same in Galillee,
' Two thousand years before !

But, after all, the golden sun
Poured out its floods on them
That watched and waited fer the One
Then borned in Bethlyham.

Also, the star of holy writ
Made noonday of the night,
While other stars that looked at it
Was envious with delight.

The sages then in worship bowed,
From every clime so fare;
O, sinner, think of that glad crowd
That congregated thare !

They was content to fall in ranks
With One that knowed the way
From Good old Jurden's stormy banks
Clean up to Judgment Day.

No matter, then, how all is mixed
' In our near-sighted eyes,
All things is fer the best, and fixed
Out straight in Paradise.

Then take things as God sends 'em here,
And, ef we live or die,
Be more and more contenteder,
Without a asking why.

O, thou that doth all things devise
And fashion fer the best,
Help us who sees with mortal eyes
To overlook the rest.





WORTER-MELON TIME.

OLD worter-melon time is a-comin' round
again,

And they ain't no man a-livin' any tick-
leder'n me,

For the way I hanker after worter-melons
is a sin—

Which is the why and wharefore, as you
can plainly see.

Oh, its in the sandy soil worter-melons
does the best,

And it's thare they'll lay and waller in
the sunshine and the dew

Till they wear all the green streaks clean
off of their breast,

And you bet I ain't a-findin' any fault
with them, air you?

They ain't no better thing in the vegetable
line;

And they don't need much tendin', as
ev'ry farmer knows;

And when they're ripe and ready fer to
pluck from the vine,
I want to say to you they're the best fruit
that grows.

It's some likes the yaller-core, and some
likes the red,
And it's some says "The little Californy"
'is the best;
But the sweetest slice of all I ever wedged
in my head,
Is the old "Edingburg Mounting-sprout,"
of the West.

You don't want no punkins nigh your wor-
ter-melon vines—
'Cause, some-way-another, they'll spile
your melons, shore;—
I've seed 'em taste like punkins, from the
core to the rines,
Which may be a fact you have heerd of
before.

But your melons that's raised right, and
tended to with care,
You can walk around amongst 'em with
a parent's pride and joy,
And thump 'em on the heads with as
fatherly a air

As ef each one of them was your little
girl er boy.

I joy in my hart jest to hear that rippin'
sound

When you split one down the back and
jolt the halves in two,
And the friends you love the best is geth-
ered all around—

And you says unto your sweetheart, "Oh,
here's the core fer you!"

And I like to slice 'em up in big pieces fer
'em all,

Especially the children, and watch their
high delight

As one by one the rines with their pink
notches falls,

And they holler fer some more, with un-
quenched appetite.

Boys takes to it natural, and I like to see
'em eat—

A slice of worter-melon's like a french-
harp in their hands,

And when they "saw" it through their
mouth sich music can't be beat—

'Cause it's music both the sperit and the
stummick understands.

WORTER-MELON TIME.

Oh, they's more in worter-melons than the
purty-colored meat,
And the overflowin' sweetness of the
worter squashed betwixt
The up'ard and the down'ard motions of
a feller's teeth,
And it's the taste of ripe old age and
juicy childhood mixed.

Fer I never taste a melon but my thoughts
flies away
To the summertime of youth, and again
I see the dawn,
And the fadin' afternoon of the long sum-
mer day,
And the dusk and dew a-fallin', and the
night a-comin' on.

And thare's the corn around us, and the
lispin' leaves and trees,
And the stars a-peekin' down on us as
still as silver mice,
And us boys in the worter-melons on our
hands and knees,
And the new moon hangin' o'er us like a
yaller-cored slice.

Oh, it's worter-melon time is a-comin' round
again,

And they ain't no man a-livin' any tick-
leder'n me,
Fer the way I hanker after worter-melons
is a sin—
Which is the why and wharefore, as you
can plainly see.





MY PHILOSOFY.

I AINT, ner don't p'tend to be,
Much posted on philosophy;
But thare is times, when all alone,
I work out idæes of my own.
And of these same thare is a few
I'd like to jest refer to you—
Pervidin' that you don't object
To listen clos't and rickollect.

I allus argy that a man
Who does about the best he can
Is plenty good enough to suit
This lower, mundane institute—
No matter ef his daily walk
Is subject fer his neighbor's talk,
And critic-minds of ev'ry whim
Jest all git up and go fer him!

I knowed a feller onc't that had
The yaller-janders mighty bad,
And each and ev'ry friend he'd meet-
Would stop and give him a receet

Fer curin' of 'em. But he'd say
He kind o' thought they'd go away
Without no medicin', and boast
That he'd git well without one doste.

He kep' a yallerin' on—and they
Perdictin' that he'd die some day
Before he knowed it! Tuck his bed,
The feller did, and lost his head,
And wundered in his mind a spell—
Then rallied, and, at last, got well;
But ev'ry friend that said he'd die
Went back on him eternaly!

Its natchural enough, I guess,
When some gits more and some gits less,
Fer them-uns on the slimmest side
To claim it aint a fair divide;
And I've knowed some to lay and wait,
And git up soon, and set up late,
'To ketch some feller they could hate
Fer goin' at a faster gait.

The signs is bad when folks commence
A findin' fault with Providence,
And balkin' 'cause the earth don't shake
At ev'ry prancin' step they take.

No man is great till he can see
How less than little he would be
Ef stripped to self, and stark and bare,
He hung his sign out anywhare.

My doctern is to lay aside
Contentions, and be satisfied.
Jest do your best, and praise er blame
That follers that, counts jest the same.
I've allus noticed grate success
Is mixed with troubles, more or less,
And its the man who does the best
That gits more kicks than all the rest.





WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE
PUNKIN.

WHEN the frost is on the punkin and the
fodder's in the shock,
And you hear the kyouck and gobble of
the struttin' turkey-cock,
And the clackin' of the guineys, and the
cluckin' of the hens,
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he tiptoes
on the fence;
O its then's the times a feller is a-feelin' at
-his best,
With the risin' sun to greet him from a
night of peaceful rest,
As he leaves the house, bare-headed, and
goes out to feed the stock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the
fodder's in the shock.

They's something kindo' hearty-like about
the atmosphere

32 *FROST ON THE PUNKIN.*

When the heat of summer's over and the
coolin' fall is here—

Of course, we miss the flowers, and the
blossoms on the trees,

And the mumble of the hummin'-birds
and buzzin' of the bees;

But the air's so appetizin', and the land-
scape through the haze

Of a crisp and sunny morning of the airy
autumn days

Is a pictur' that no painter has the colorin'
to mock—

When the frost is on the punkin and the
fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty rustle of the tassels of the
corn,

And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as
golden as the morn;

The stubble in the furries—kindo' lone-
some-like, but still

A-preachin' sermons to us of the barns they
grewed to fill;

The strawstack in the medder, and the
reaper in the shed;

The hosses in their stalls below—the clover
overhead!—

FROST ON THE PUNKIN. 33

O, it sets my heart a-clickin' like the tickin'
of a clock,
When the frost is on the punkin and the
fodder's in the shock!





ON THE DEATH OF LITTLE MAHALA
ASHCRAFT.

"LITTLE HALY! Little Haly!" cheeps the
robin in the tree;
"Little Haly!" sighs the clover, "Little
Haly!" moans the bee;
"Little Haly! Little Haly!" calls the kill-
deer at twilight;
And the katydids and crickets hollers
"Haly" all the night.

The sunflowers and the hollyhawks droops
over the garden fence;
The old path down the gardenwalks still
holds her footprints' dents;
And the well-sweep's swingin' bucket seems
to wait fer her to come
And start it on its wortery errant down the
old bee-gum.

The bee-hives all is quiet, and the little
Jersey steer,

LITTLE MAHALA ASHCRAFT. 35

When any one comes nigh it, acts so lone-
some-like and queer ;
And the little Banty chickens kind o' cut-
ters faint and low.
Like the hand that now was feedin' 'em
was one they didn't know.

They's sorrow in the wavin' leaves of all
the apple-trees ;
And sorrow in the harvest-sheaves, and
sorrow in the breeze ;
And sorrow in the twitter of the swallers
'round the shed ;
And all the song her red-bird sings is " Lit-
tle Haly's dead !"

The medder 'pears to miss her, and the
pathway through the grass.
Whare the dewdrops ust to kiss her little
bare feet as she passed ;
And the old pin in the gate-post seems to
kindo-sorto' doubt
That Haly's little sunburnt hands'll ever
pull it out.

Did her father er her mother ever love her
more'n me,
Er her sisters er her brother prize her love
more tenderly ?

36 *LITTLE MAHALA ASHCRAFT.*

I question—and what answer—only tears,
and tears alone,
And ev'ry neghbor's eyes is full o' tear-
drops as my own.

"Little Haly! Little Haly!" cheeps the
robin in the tree;
"Little Haly!" sighs the clover, "Little
Haly!" moans the bee;
"Little Haly! Little Haly!" calls the kill-
deer at twilight,
And the katydids and crickets hollers
"Haly" all the night.





THE MULBERRY TREE.

O, its many's the scenes which is dear to
my mind
As I think of my childhood so long left
behind ;
The home of my birth, with its old pun-
cheon floor,
And the bright mornin'-glories that grewed
round the door ;
The warped clab-board roof whare the rain
it run off
Into streams of sweet dreams as I laid in
the loft,
Countin' all of the joys that was dearest
to me,
And a-thinkin' the most of the mulberry
tree.

And to-day as I dream, with both eyes
wide-awake,
I can see the old tree, and its limbs as they
shake,

38 *THE MULBERRY TREE.*

And the long purple berries that rained
on the ground
Whare the pastur was bald whare we
trommped it around.
And again, peekin' up through the thick
leafy shade,
I can see the glad smiles of the friends when
I strayed
With my little bare feet from my own
mother's knee
To foller them off to the mulberry tree.

Leanin' up in the forks, I can see the old
rail,
And the boy climbin' up it, claw, tooth,
and toe-nail,
And in fancy can hear, as he spits on his
hands,
The ring of his laugh and the rip of his
pants.
But that rail led to glory, as certain and
shore
As I'll never climb thare by that rout' any
more—
What was all the green laurels of Fame
unto me,
With my brows in the boughs of the mul-
berry tree?

THE MULBERRY TREE. 39

Then its who can fergit the old mulberry
tree

That he knowed in the days when his
thoughts was as free

As the flutterin' wings of the birds that
flew out

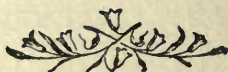
Of the tall wavin' tops as the boys come
about?

O, a crowd of my memories, laughin' and
gay,

Is a-climbin' the fence of that pastur' to-
day,

And a-pantin' with joy, as us boys ust to be,
They go racin' acrost fer the mulberry tree.





TO MY OLD NEGHBOR, WILLIAM
LEACHMAN.

Fer forty year and better you have been a
friend to me,
Through days of sore afflictions and dire
adversity,
You allus had a kind word of counsel to
impart,
Which was like a healin' 'intment to the
sorrow of my hart.

When I burried my first womern, William
Leachman, it was you
Had the only consolation that I could lis-
ten to—
Fer I knowed you had gone through it and
had rallied from the blow,
And when you said I'd do the same, I
knowed you'd ort to know.

But that time I'll long remember; how I
wundered here and thare—

Through the settin'-room and kitchen, and
out in the open air—
And the snowflakes whirlin', whirlin', and
the fields a frozen glare,
And the neighbors' sleds and wagons con-
gregatin' ev'rywhare.

I turned my eyes to'rds heaven, but the
sun was hid away ;
I turned my eyes to'rds earth again, but
all was cold and gray ;
And the clock, like ice a-crackin', clickt
the icy hours in two—
And my eyes'd never thawed out ef it
hadn't been fer you !

We set thare by the smoke-house—me and
you out thare alone—
Me a-thinkin'—you a-talkin' in a soothin'
undertone—
You a-talkin'—me a-thinkin' of the sum-
mers long ago,
And a-writin' " Marthy—Marthy " with my
finger in the snow !

William Leachman, I can see you jest as
plain as I could then ;

And your hand is on my shoulder, and you
rouse me up again ;
And I see the tears a-drippin' from your
own eyes, as you say :
" Be reconciled and bear it—we but linger
fer a day !"

At the last Old Settlers' Meetin', we went
j'intly, you and me—
Your hosses and my wagon, as you wanted
it to be ;
And sence I can remember, from the time
we've neighbored here,
In all sich friendly actions you have double-
done your sheer.

It was better than the meetin', too, that
9-mile talk we had
Of the times when we first settled here and
travel was so bad ;
When we had to go on hoss-back, and
sometimes on " Shanks's mare,"
And " blaze " a road fer them behind that
had to travel thare.

And now we was a-trottin' 'long a level
gravel pike,

In a big two-hoss road-wagon, jest as easy
as you like—

Two of us on the front seat, and our wim-
ern-folks behind,

A-settin' in their Winsor cheers in perfect
peace of mind!

And we pinte out old landmarks, nearly
faded out of sight:—

Thare they ust to rob the stage-coach; thare
Gash Morgan had the fight

With the old stag-deer that pronged him—
how he battled fer his life,

And lived to prove the story by the handle
of his knife.

Thare the first griss-mill was put up in the
settlement, and we

Had tuck our grindin' to it in the fall of
Forty-three—

When we tuck our rifles with us, techin'
elbows all the way,

And a-stickin' right together ev'ry minute,
night and day.

Thare ust to stand the tavern that they
called the "Travelers' Rest,"

And thare, beyent the covered bridge,
 "The Counterfitters' Nest"—
Whare they claimed the house was ha'nted
 —that a man was murdered thare,
And burried underneath the floor, er round
 the place somewhere.

And the old Plank Road they laid along in
 Fifty-one er two—
You know we talked about the times when
 that old road was new:
How "Uncle Sam" put down that road and
 never taxed the State
Was a problem, don't you rickollect, we
 couldn't dimonstrate?

Ways was devious, William Leachman, that
 me and you has past;
But as I found you true at first, I find you
 true at last,
And, now the time's a-comin' mighty nigh
 our jurney's end,
I want to throw wide open all my soul to
 you, my friend.

With the stren'th of all my bein', and the
 heat of hart and brane,

And ev'ry livin' drop of blood in artery
and vane,
I love you and respect you, and I venerate
your name,
For the name of William Leachman and
'True Manhood's jest the same!





MY FIDDLE.

MY FIDDLE?—Well, I kindo' keep her handy,
don't you know!

Though I aint so much inclined to tromp
the strings and switch the bow

As I was before the timber of my elbows
got so dry,

And my fingers was more limber-like and
caperish and spry;

Yet I can plonk and plunk and plink,

And tune her up and play,

And jest lean back and laugh and wink

At ev'ry rainy day!

My playin's only middlin'—tunes I picked
up when a boy—

The kindo'-sorto' fiddlin' that the folks
calls "cordaroy,"

"The Old Fat Gal," and "Rye-straw," and

"My Sailyor's on the Sea,"

Is the old cowtillions I "saw" when the
ch'ice is left to me;

And so I plunk and plonk and plink,
And rosum-up my bow,
And play the tunes that makes you think
The dévil's in your toe!

I was allus a romancin', do-less boy, to tell
the truth,
A-fiddlin' and a-dancin', and a-wastin' of
my youth,
And a actin' and a cuttin'-up all sorts o'
silly pranks
That wasn't wo'th a button of anybody's
thanks!
But they tell me, when I ust to plink
And plonk and plunk and play,
My music seemed to have the kink
O' drivin' cares away!

That's how this here old fiddle's won my
hart's endurin' love!
From the strings acrost her middle to the
schreechin' keys above—
From her "aperñ," over bridge, and to the
ribbon round her throat,
She's a wooin', cooin' pigeon, singin' "Love
me" ev'ry note!

And so I pat her neck, and plink
Her strings with lovin' hands,
And, list'nin' clos't, I sometimes think
'She kindo' understands!





THE CLOVER.

SOME sings of the lily, and daisy, and rose,
And the pansies and pinks that the sum-
mertime throws

In the green grassy lap of the medder that
lays

Blinkin' up at the skies through the sun-
shiny days;

But what is the lily, and all of the rest
Of the flowers, to a man with a hart in his
breast

That was dipped brimmin' full of the honey
and dew

Of the sweet clover-blossoms his babyhood
knew?

I never set eyes on a clover-field now,
Er fool round a stable, er climb in the mow,
But my childhood comes back jest as clear
and as plain

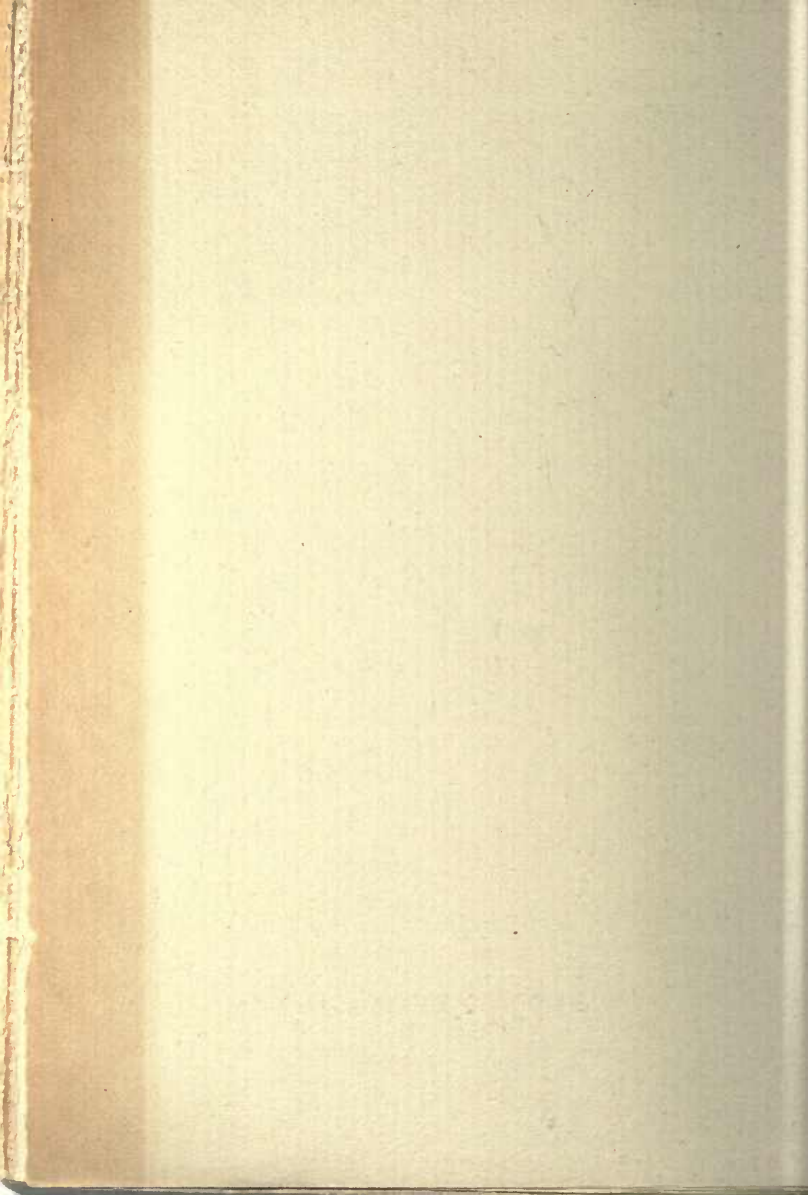
As the smell of the clover I'm sniffin'
again;

And I wunder away in a bare-footed dream,

Whare I tangle my toes in the blossoms
that gleam
With the dew of the dawn of the morning
of love
Ere it wept o'er the graves that I'm weepin'
above.

And so I love clover—it seems like a part
Of the sacredest sorrows and joys of my
hart;
And wherever it blossoms, oh, thare let me
bow
And thank the good God as I'm thankin'
Him now;
And I pray to Him still fer the stren'th,
when I die,
To go out in the clover and tell it good-bye,
And lovin'ly nestle my face in its bloom
While my soul slips away on a breth of
perfume.





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